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PROPAGANDA

I. The Aims of Propaganda

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The power of the Communist party, in China as elsewhere, is built upon numerous factors, but three are outstanding, namely, its organization, (including its secret police), its military forces, and its propaganda. Propaganda is used to promote military conquest as well as organizational expansion, while both military forces and organization are used to back up propaganda. Every Communist Party member is required to do his share of propaganda. Little propaganda is not originated and directed by the Party organization.

Before the Communists assume political control, propaganda is used to infiltrate and soften the spiritual fortification of the Party's enemies. After conquest of an area, propaganda is used to promote the Party's governmental program and policies. Propaganda is part of the program to maintain voluntary discipline. Positively, it is necessary to propagate and explain the policies and opinions of the Party to the public; negatively, it is necessary to stop and hit back at the "propaganda and rumor" that are "mistaken and reactionary."

Furthermore, in the effort of building a propaganda network, the Communists expect to have accomplished something other than just propaganda. The party requires the propaganda workers to set good examples for the public. It also expects the propagandists to train more people to carry on its propaganda program. Theoretically, a good propagandist shall believe in what he says, and a good believer shall be a good man of action to carry out what he believes. By the continuous training and growth in the number of the propagandists, the Party gets more and more of its work done.

II. The Propaganda Organization

A. The Reporter

The network of propaganda is built around the Communist Party. At each level of the Party organization, from the province down to the ch'u (district below county), a responsible member, many times the Party secretary, is assigned as a reporter. He is responsible for making constant, systematic reports of current events, Party policy, work assignments and work experiences. At least once every two months, each reporter makes a political report to mass meetings and to the representative meetings of the local people. The title and the outline of contents are decided or approved beforehand by the Party secretary at the related level. The result of the report also is reported to the same secretary. Some of these reports are selected and published in local newspapers by

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the related provincial or local Party committees.

B. Propagandists

1. Selection and methods

Besides the official reporter, every branch of the Party organization selects a number of Party members, youth corps members, model laborers and other revolutionary activists to be propagandists. These propagandists should have the willingness to lead in labor productivity and other work as well as the ability to promote propaganda. They may choose one or several of the following methods to carry out their work:

1) personal conversations
2) passing around information
3) reading newspapers for others
4) receiving and spreading People's radio broadcasts
5) writing and painting propaganda pictures, articles, etc.
6) editing wall newspapers.

The appointment of the propagandists is checked by the Party branch committee and approved by the Party organization at the level higher. Party and Youth Corps secretaries, committee members who have working relations with the public (such as: labor union workers, cooperative workers, village workers, school teachers, staff members of public educational institutions, wall newspaper editors (etc...) all should be propagandists.

2. Activities

At least once a month, the propagandists of a Party branch gather together to receive guidance from above and to discuss current work. They should also reflect the conditions of the public. This kind of meeting occurs not more than once a week. Once a month, the county (or city) Party committee calls a joint meeting of the Party branch secretaries or a representative meeting of the propagandists or a rally of all the propagandists in the area. The Party secretary of the county (or city) makes a report on current events and missions. Then he leads the group in checking the propaganda work of the past month and in discussing the future propaganda work of the coming month. In case of difficulties of transportation, this kind of meeting may be called by the district Party committee which directs the branch Party propaganda work. In the rural areas, the district Party committee establishes the system of propaganda transfer stations. By this system, the district Party committee members regularly, but separately, call in the propagandists or representatives of the propagandists of several Party branches to the stations where the contents and methods of propaganda are taught. There they also distribute and explain the propaganda materials.

3. Instruction and program

The Party committees of all levels constantly furnish the propa-

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gandists with instructions and materials. Party newspapers and publications at all levels regularly publish discussions about the propagandists as well as about their work. The Party schools and training classes at all levels offer courses on propaganda. When possible, they establish short courses to train propagandists.

Since the Party formulates the whole propaganda program, it organizes and utilizes in the program all the so-called democratic parties and people's organizations as well as the workers in the People's government, People's Liberation Army and cultural, educational and artistic circles. The provincial and city Party committees, according to local conditions, plan a definite program of propaganda once every half year. Upon the approval by the related central committee sub-bureau, this program is put into practice and checked regularly.

C. Basic Organizational Units

1. Outlets

The basic organizational units of propaganda are:

1) newspaper reading groups
2) blackboard newspapers
3) radio receiving groups
4) megaphone units
5) propaganda groups
6) propaganda teams
7) current event study groups.

Above these basic units, the work of an area is supervised and coordinated by a committee; in rural areas, it is the cultural and educational committee; in the city, the propaganda committee; in the factories and mines, the labor union's cultural and educational committee; in the schools, the propaganda and educational committee of the students' association. These committees, together with the secretary of the local Party branch committee and the Party propaganda head, are used as nuclei around which is built the local propaganda net, which absorbs all the local school teachers, propaganda workers of the local government and people's organizations.

2. Committees

The missions of these committees are threefold: first, they guide the local propaganda activities according to the program decided by the Party. Secondly, they insure accuracy in the political interpretation of the propaganda. Thirdly, they help the organization and consolidation of the propaganda groups among the masses. In order to achieve these purposes, these committees need to build the necessary working system of meeting, report, investigation, appraisal and criticism. According to incomplete statistics, in December, 1951, there were 85,000 propagandists in northwest China.

4. Cultural corps

In the army, cultural work corps promoted propaganda by means of entertainment. In local dances and songs, the Cultural Work Corps of the Fifth Army (originally the Sinkiang National Army) in the summer of 1951 promoted the Party's Nationality policy and the Resist-America Aid-Korea movement in Sinkiang. They visited various villages and regularly attracted an audience of from three or four thousand to ten thousand people. The members included thirteen minority groups living in Sinkiang. Some of them went to Peking in 1953 and presented a performance of 21 acts before the audience in the capital.

The visit was returned by the Central Nationality Dancing Corps of Peking which sent a performing team of 140-odd members to Sinkiang in April, 1955 to celebrate the establishment of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. It spent more than half a year in Sinkiang and returned to Peking on November 13 after having visited ten special districts, three autonomous chou, seven counties, two state farms, three mines in Sinkiang and two cities (Lanchow and Su-chou) in Kansu. It performed 112 times before audiences of various nationalities totalling more than 439,000 people.

IV. The Methods of Propaganda.

Besides those already mentioned, the Communists are using many other methods of propaganda. Parading, signature drives, circulation of pictures and pictorial stories, large-scale welcome meetings for important personnel sent from Peking, lantern slides and movies produced by the Party and the government, theater activities such as opera, drama, dance, and concerts all have been used as means of propaganda. The public accusation meeting is another form. No matter what the main target of a particular accusation meeting may be, whether a landlord or the U.S.A., the accusation always carries out the propaganda of the day, whether it be the Resist-America Aid-Korea movement or land reform. Other kinds of meetings are equally useful. "Model Peasants Rallies" held in the main farming districts of Sinkiang are the place to promote propaganda for increasing production as well as for denouncing germ warfare.

A. Festivals

Festivals are always good opportunities for promoting propaganda. In Northwest China where most of the minority groups are followers of the Moslem religion, the Islamic festivals are used as a time to express the thoughtfulness of the Communist government. For instance, during their celebration of the three major Moslem festivals of the year, the butchery tax on beef and mutton consumed by Mohammedan communities is exempted. Further-

III. Functions of Propaganda System

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• 208 A. Sounding Board

This propaganda network has another important function. It also checks public opinion and relays it to the Party. Every propagandist is supposed to report back not only what he has said but also what the public has said to him. Since the Communist Party has control of all newspapers, radio broadcast programs and other means of public information, there is no other way of knowing the true feelings of the people. Thus, the propaganda machine is utilized to sound out public opinion, in order to better deal with the public.

Furthermore, the propaganda machine is fluid and can be used as a weapon in every field. (For the details, see the Propaganda section of the General Handbook).

B. Work with National Minorities

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*563 1. "Central People's Government Mission to National Minorities of Northwest"

Besides the regular propaganda organizations, special groups and teams have been sent at various times to different areas. For instance, in 1950 the Communists sent a "Central People's Government Mission to the National Minorities in the Northwest." The chief of the mission was Shen Chun-ju, the deputy chiefs were Sa K'ung-liao and Ma Yu-kwei. The mission visited Panchan Lama on November 1, at Kumbum monastery in Chinghai. There they also attended a welcome meeting of 12,000 people of all the nationalities in Chinghai. The Panchan Lama presented Shan, Sa and Ma with katag, consisting of silk woven portraits of Buddha, the most precious gift to the Tibetans (obviously these were specially made, usually there is no portrait of Buddha), and expressed his profound respects for, and gratitude to, Chairman Mao Tse-tung. "At the welcome meeting to the mission at Sining city on November 2, representatives of seven nationalities in Chinghai submitted to Chairman Mao a katag consisting of a silk banner more than 10 geet in length, inscribed with words in the Chinese, Arabic and Tibetan languages, stating: "Most Respected and Honored Chairman Mao; under your glorious banner, we have achieved equality, mutual assistance, love and unity." On the top of the banner there were attached 8 national flags of China and the portrait of Mao, at the bottom were paintings of the people of the seven nationalities in the province. (NCNA, November 4, 1950).

Of course, these activities greatly impressed the local people. This same mission in different groups visited Ninghsia and Sinkiang.

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658 In 1952 the Party promoted an ideological remoulding and study campaign among the literary and art circles in the Northwest. Many of those so indoctrinated were organized into groups and sent

*668 796 656 Furthermore, in places where restrictions are exercised over the slaughter of cattle and sheep, these restrictions may be relaxed.

B. Guided Tours

*668 484 648 *563 Representatives of national minorities from northwest China are invited to visit Peking and other urban centers of north and east China. They are guided to see the factories, schools and palaces of historical interest. After being deeply impressed they are sent back to their homes. They often become good native propagandists for the Party.

C. School Programs

*668 • 208 876 In local schools, the pupils are not spared from propaganda. For instance, in the Mongol schools in the province of Chinghai:

"In mathematics, the number of American and bandit Rhee's troops annihilated by the Chinese and Korean people's armies in Korea and the construction figures in Chinghai were made into questions for the students and the masses to solve. By this way, they not only learned mathematics but they also retained in their minds the victorious results of our war and the great achievements in construction following the liberation." (Sian, Ch'un-chung jih-pao, March 30, 1952.)

D. Other Methods

*668 208 The whole propaganda system generally functions as follows. When the Party central committee decides to promote certain propaganda, it orders the reporter at every level of the Party organization to report the party line to the people inside as well as outside the Party. Then the propagandists and activists all go out to do the work. This can be done in various ways, according to the situation. In factories, it may be a kind of question and answer. The workers might be asked to check each other with these questions until all got the right answers. In streets, it might be in the form of door-to-door visits and "casual chats." While these were going on, the people would be bombarded daily with the same theme in newspapers, blackboard newspapers, wall newspapers, periodicals, books, pamphlets, pictures, cartoons, radio broadcasts, concerts, lantern slides, movies, plays, operas, story-tellers, picture-story books, street meetings, signature drives, production competitions, challenges, counter-challenges.. and a lot of other devices to drive the point home.

V. The Campaigns and Contents of Propaganda.

A. Campaigns

1. Destruction of organized resistance

The contents of propaganda follow the shifts in the Party line.

*668 The subject changes as the Party moves from one campaign to
208 another. For instance, in Northwest China the first stage emphasized the destruction of organized resistance and the establishment of the Communist Government. About the time that the editorial of Jen-min jih-pao, Peiping, November 14, 1950, declared that "a comprehensive and far-reaching propaganda campaign should be carried out beforehand so as to enable the masses to gain a true understanding of the significance, functions and the way of the convening the chu people's representatives' conference" in Sining, Chinghai, "the Central People's Government Mission to the Northwest...convened three forum meetings of representatives of Tibetan, Mongolian, Turk, Moslem, Salar and Kazakh nationalities, and personages of all circles in Sining, and visited the mosque at the East Gate of Sining and the Chinghai Nationalities House..."

2. Resist-America, Aid-Korea and related movements

After the Communists participated in the Korean War and when the U.N. was discussing the case against Red China, an anti-Austin (chief U.S. delegate to the U.N. at the time) Rally" was held at Sian, Shensi. It promoted the Resist-America, Aid-Korea movement as well as the three self (self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating) movement of the Chinese Christian churches. In January, 1951, there came the first wave of attacks against the religious group I-Kuan-Tao. In 1952, there were the three anti and five anti-movements. About the same time, a movement for production-increase was launched.

3. Agricultural tax campaign

*668 When the new agricultural tax system came into force in June,
651 1952, the propaganda gave unreserved priase of the new tax and cursed the old regime. It is a good example of the Communist propaganda:

"New minimum tax rate is 7 per cent. For the majority of peasants, the rate will range from 11 to 15 per cent. Exemptions or tax reductions will be given those having economic difficulties arising from calamities, lack of manpower or disabilities and to families of the Chinese People's Volunteers in Korea and Chinese People's Liberation Army men. The new system is based on average annual agricultural income of every member of a family.

This new tax system is in sharp contrast to multifarious taxes under the Kuomintang regime. At that time peasants on an average paid from 30 to 60 per cent of what was left to them in taxes to the Kuomintang government after paying 50 to 80 or even 90 per cent of their harvest to landlords as rent." (NCNA, Peking, June 20, 1952. See section Agriculture of General Handbook for an evaluation of the actual tax burden.)

Judging by the above paragraph, the peasants under the Nationalists (Kuomintang) paid as high as 90 per cent of their harvest to

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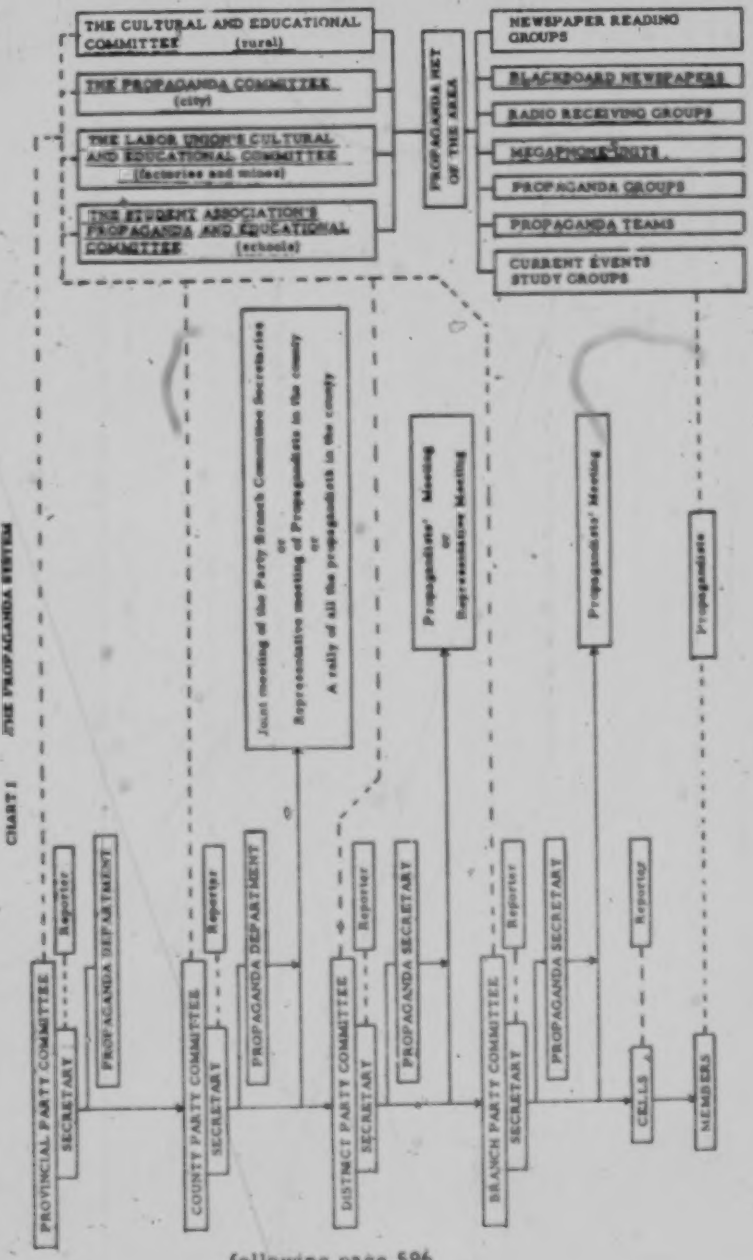

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